

period of 55 years; and to the curvilinear, a period of only 45 years.

My principal task, then, is to name to you some of the principal buildings of this geometrical period; to point out to you those peculiarities which entitle them to separate classification, and to explain those points of resemblance and contrast which, on the one hand, assimilate them to, and on the other, distinguish them from, those of the preceding and following styles.

The leading and most characteristic feature of the buildings of this period, as already stated, is the form of the tracery of their windows, to which, as consisting generally of the simplest geometrical figures, the term *geometrical* has been given. It is distinguished in this respect, therefore, from the *lancet* period, in which tracery was never employed, as well as from the *curvilinear*, in which the forms of the tracery are almost invariably of a flowing or undulating character.

Taking this rule, then, as our principal guide in determining the duration of the geometrical period, we have first to find out, if possible, the precise time when tracery of whatever kind began to be used; and, secondly, the precise time when flowing tracery began to be practised: the interval will be the proper measure of the duration of what we have ventured to call the geometrical style.

There appears to be little doubt that the first important building of authentic date in which tracery, properly so called, began to be practised, was the Abbey Church of St. Peter at Westminster, the foundation-stone of which was laid with great pomp and ceremony by King Henry the Third, in the year of our Lord 1245. The choir and transepts were constructed within a few years of this date, and exhibit throughout the whole of their details a strong assimilation in their forms to those of the *lancet* period. In their windows, however, a remarkable difference is to be noticed; in the greater part of them the plain lancet head has vanished, and in its place is to be seen, in the lowest and highest windows, a foliated circle carried by two trefoiled lancets, and in the middle, or triforium stage, a foliated circle inclosed within a spherical triangle; the whole of the window-head being, in all cases, pierced through to the plane of the glass, so as to leave no solid space or surface in the spandrels, thus fulfilling all the conditions of a traceried window.

In this, the first building in which tracery appeared, and in which, in most of its other details, little advance or departure from the usual forms of lancet work is to be seen, it will not be a matter of surprise that we should find some of the windows still exhibiting the early form. This is the case in the transept ends, in which two rows of plain, lancet-headed windows appear, the doors below them, and the windows on each side of them, in the east and west walls, exhibiting, nevertheless, the new fashion of geometrical tracery.

In the chapter-house of the same building, which was commenced A.D. 1250, the new style entirely predominates, and the windows are large, and fine examples of geometrical tracery, of simple but striking pattern. They are engraved in the last part of M. Van Voort's "Decorated Windows."

It is on the authority which this building affords, therefore, that I have adopted the year 1245 as that of the commencement of the geometrical period; and although it is possible that some little time may have elapsed before the example thus set in this noble metropolitan church was universally or even generally adopted, and although it is probable that a building or two containing lancet windows may be proved to have been built subsequently to this date, yet I think that it cannot be denied that Westminster Abbey furnishes us with sufficient authority for assuming that the appearance of geometrical tracery was one of the earliest indications of the impending change of style, and, therefore, one of the fittest marks by which to characterize the new period; or that the commencement of this period may be stated to be at least as early as the year 1245.

With respect to the termination of this period and the introduction of flowing tracery, evidence of the same precise nature does not exist: we have, however, sufficient testimony of that negative character before referred to, to enable us to conclude, that it was not in use

before the year 1310, and yet in full perfection in the year 1320. We have numerous examples, constructed, according to historical record, during the first ten years of the fourteenth century, which display in their windows the formal outline of geometrical work; such as the chapter-house of Wells Cathedral, built by William de la Mare, who ruled from 1293 to 1302; Queen Eleanor's crosses, built soon after the year 1300; the south aisle of Gloucester Cathedral, built by Abbot Thokey, about 1308; the gateway of St. Augustine's Abbey at Canterbury, built in the year 1309; the tomb of Crouchback in Westminster Abbey, built 1307; the choir-screen of Canterbury Cathedral, built by Prior Henry D'Estris in 1304; at the same time that we have Prior Crandens's Chapel at Ely, and the lantern of the cathedral, commenced at or about the year 1321, containing windows of excellent flowing tracery. If we are to trust the Chronicle, which states that the reconstruction of Hingham Church, in Norfolk, which contains a series of fine curvilinear windows, with here and there a lingering geometrical form, was commenced by its rector, Remigius de Hethersete, and its patron, John-le-Marshal, in the year of our Lord 1316, we have almost the very example of which we are in search. On the conjoint testimony, however, of various buildings, rather than upon the evidence of this single example, I am disposed to take the year 1315, the mean, in fact, between 1310 and 1320, as that of the commencement of the curvilinear period, premising, however, as before, that it is quite possible that a few windows of geometrical outline may be found in buildings constructed after this date.

The interval, then, between their limits,—that is to say, the period of seventy years intervening between the years 1245 and 1315,—I propose to call the geometrical period of English church architecture.*

E. SHARPE.

REVIEW OF THE COMPETITION DESIGNS FOR THE BUILDINGS IN SPICER-STREET, SPITALFIELDS.

THE competition alluded to last week in connection with a subject to which we have long directed public attention, possessed considerable interest, and exhibited some novel arrangements, although the number of competitors was small, and features of resemblance might be discovered in details of the designs, which might have been suggested by the plans issued by the "Metropolitan Association" some years ago, to which the name of Mr. Charles Peirce, architect, was appended, or by the model lodging-house of the Society for the Improvement of the Labouring Classes, described in a former number of our journal. No particular instructions, as we were informed, were given to the competitors, except that dormitories for 300 single men were to be provided, and that economy was to be observed, but verbal information was given to such as applied for it. The ground in Spicer-street is of rather an inconvenient shape, and we can best liken it to a quadrilateral figure with one of the angles cut off. Considerable difference in the plans and the accommodation afforded, resulted from the different amount of space given to the general living-room and kitchen department of the lodging-house and to the baths and washhouses, respecting which it appeared that the committee had allowed the competitors to form their own judgments. On Mr. Beck's plan the lodging-house occupied a large portion of the area, by reason of a careful provision for these portions of the scheme and the general comfort of the inmates; and the residences for families were consequently a little reduced in number. We are not sure, also, the whole plan being considered, that as much was made of the ground as in some other instances; but in the general attention to convenience which the design exhibited, there was sufficient reason for the decision of the Committee. Drainage and ventilation had been well considered. The objects sought to be attained, may be comprised under three general divisions. One part of the ground was devoted to a lodging-house, another to residences for families, and a third to baths and wash-houses. The lodging-

house was arranged in the form of three sides of a square, the internal space in the ground floor being occupied by a large coffee-room, lighted from above. The entrance and staircase were in the centre of the building, and on one side was the superintendent's residence, and on the other the cook's shop, furnished with hot plates, and having a bar looking into the coffee-room. In line with the cook's shop, and only separated from it by a screen, was the kitchen, in which were seven or eight tables, two fireplaces, and a considerable number of hot plates. The coffee-room, as we may already have indicated, was placed opposite the entrance, having the kitchen on one side, and a reading-room, to which a small library was attached, on the other. Amongst other arrangements on this floor, were lavatories, a pay counter at the left of the entrance, and a lobby, at the angle of the building, communicating from the exterior with the cook's shop, for the families occupying residences in the other portion of the ground to procure provisions. At the side of the lodging-house, baths and wash-houses were provided, with an entrance from the lodging-house, and one for the families, and separate doorways for egress. There were waiting-lobbies, a pay-office, over which was the cold water tank, baths—these perhaps fewer in number than desirable—washing-rooms, drying-rooms, and a laundry. At this part of the ground were other conveniences, for which the drainage from the wash-house was made available; and for the rain-water, tanks were provided in different parts of the ground. The upper floors had compartments for beds, arranged on each side a centre passage, and a sick ward had not been omitted. In the basement were cellars for the lodgers' property, a boiler-house, places for coals, and contrivances for the ventilation. This was intended to be managed by a large shaft, drawing the foul air along air drains in the basement and through the furnace.—The residences were in a building placed at the end of the ground, at right angles to the lodging-house, and were arranged with staircases communicating with several distinct residences, and not differing materially from the principle developed by others of the competitors.

Notwithstanding the good principle upon which this plan had been arranged, and the valuable hints it contained, we do not think that the area occupied by the coffee-room, reading-room, &c., could be at all requisite for 300 lodgers, half of whom, at least, it is only fair to calculate, would be at any time out of doors, or in other parts of the building. It is very desirable that all the advantages which Mr. Beck has so carefully provided should be considered, and we are amongst those who look for the most beneficial results from attending a little to the household comfort of the working man; but something less than the ample area of the Reform Club may, we think, be tolerated by one of the "industrious classes," and had Mr. Beck raised his building to gain the requisite number of beds, he might, perhaps, have found room on the ground for a greater number of residences for families, an object equally important in the locality.

In this part of the scheme Mr. Daukes's designs have advantages, and we are rather surprised that he is the only competitor who has availed himself of the external gallery system, so often proposed—we think, even in the plans of the "Metropolitan Association," already referred to—but hardly attempted for several distinct residences, a court leading out of Rathbone-place, where the galleries are of wood, and very ill constructed, being the only instance that we can at present call to mind.

Mr. Daukes arranged his buildings on the ground in the following manner:—The residences formed three sides of a square, which was open on the fourth side to the street, excepting an enclosing railing with entrance gates. The lodging-house fronted to the same street, and was—in two, at least, of Mr. Daukes's three designs—attached to the block of residences. The lodging-house formed an inverted T in plan, and occupied less ground than in Mr. Beck's design. The block containing the residences, in one of the designs, had each compartment or subdivision arranged so as to provide one residence on the ground-floor, with entrance door from the square, another residence above it on the one-pair floor, to

* The remainder next week.